

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 04503 061322Z

43

ACTION DPW-01

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 IO-14 DRC-01 /102 W

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P 061150Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9345

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 4503

FOR EA STEARNS AND U/PW SIEVERTS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, LA

SUBJ: POW/MIA - EMMET KAY - SUMMARY OF EMBASSY ACTIONS

REF: STATE 115946

SINCE THE FORMATION OF THE PGNU ON APRIL 5 OF THIS YEAR, WE HAVE MADE FREQUENT REPRESENTATIONS TO MEMBERS OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT, THE JOINT COMMISSION AND KEY DIPLOMATS CONCERNING THE ENTIRE PW/MIA ISSUE. OUR EFFORTS HAVE BEEN SUPPORTED BY SIMILAR EFFORTS ON THE PART OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS, THE INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY AND LOCAL JOURNALISTS. THE FOLLOWING SUMMARY OF MISSION'S EFFORTS MAY BE HELPFUL IN ANSWERING PRESS AND OTHER QUERIES ON BACKGROUND BASIS.

1. ON APRIL 10, AMBASSADOR BROACHED THE PW/MIA ISSUE WITH PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA PHOUMA, WHO, IN TURN, STATED HE WOULD RAISE THE SUBJECT WITH THE CABINET.

2. AMBASSADOR CALLED ON DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER PHOUMI VONGVICHIT (PATHET LAO) ON APRIL 11 AND COVERED A BROAD RANGE OF TOPICS INCLUDING THE PW/MIA ISSUE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 VIENTI 04503 061322Z

AND EMMET KAY. AMBASSADOR MENTIONED THAT CONGRESSIONAL

ATTITUDES REGARDING U.S. ASSISTANCE MIGHT WELL BE AFFECTED BY THE MANNER IN WHICH THE POW/MIA PROBLEM WAS RESOLVED. ON THE RELEASE OF KAY, THE FOREIGN MINISTER STATED THAT HE WOULD INFORM THE AMBASSADOR AS SOON AS A DECISION HAD BEEN REACHED.

3. ON APRIL 12, AMBASSADOR CALLED ON TIANETHONE CHANTARASY, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (VIENTIANE SIDE), AND REITERATED SUBSTANTIALLY THE SAME REMARKS MADE TO PHOUMI THE PRECEDING DAY. TIANETHONE SEEMED UNFAMILIAR WITH THE PROBLEM AND THE AMBASSADOR SENT AN AIDE-MEMOIRE TO HIM ON EMMET KAY, OTHER AMERICANS KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN ALIVE IN PATHET LAO HANDS, AND ON THE NUMBER OF MIAS ON OUR LIST.

4. THE AMBASSADOR MENTIONED, ON APRIL 23, TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR (VIENTIANE SIDE) PHENG PHONGSAVAN THAT IT WOULD BE A GRAVE ERROR TO WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MOMENT TO RELEASE KAY.

5. AMBASSADOR FORWARDED COPIES OF AIDE-MEMOIRE ON PW/MIA MATTERS ON APRIL 27 TO SOVIET AMBASSADOR VDOVINE.

6. ON APRIL 28, AMBASSADOR VDOVINE TOLD AMBASSADOR WHITEHOUSE THAT HE HAD RAISED THE PW/MIA SUBJECT WITH THE PATHET LAO.

7. AMBASSADOR, ON MAY 2, MET WITH MINISTER OF CULTS MAHA KOU SOUVANNAMETHI (PATHET LAO) AND RAISED THE KAY ISSUE -- NO REACTION.

8. AMBASSADOR, IN A MEETING WITH THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION SOUK VONGSAK (PATHET LAO) ON MAY 3, ASKED WHEN EMMET KAY WOULD BE RELEASED. SOUK WAS NON-COMMITTAL BUT IMPLIED THAT HE WOULD BE RELEASED IN THE 60-DAY PERIOD.

9. ON MAY 8, LOCAL CBS STRINGER WAS TOLD BY COLONEL PHAO BOUNNAPHOL, LPF SPOKESMAN AND MEMBER OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE, THAT "LPF HAVE NOT YET MADE A DECISION" ABOUT KAY'S RELEASE. DEPARTING ARMA CALLED ON SOVIET MILITARY ATTACHE ON MAY 8 AND PROBED SUBJECT OF KAY'S RELEASE. SOVIET ATTACHE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 VIENTI 04503 061322Z

PROMISED TO "PUT A WORD IN" WITH THE LPF.

10. INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS GENERAL DELEGATE OTT CALLED ON THE AMBASSADOR MAY 8. IN GENERAL DISCUSSION, OTT WAS REQUESTED TO PROVIDE HIS GOOD OFFICES REGARDING PW/MIA MATTERS.

11. ON MAY 9, THE AMBASSADOR MET WITH THE MINISTER OF

JUSTICE AND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE KHAMKING SOUVANLASY (VIENTIANE SIDE) TO DISCUSS THE PW/MIA ISSUE AND SPECIFICALLY KAY. KHAMKING STATED HE HAD RAISED THE QUESTION WITH THE FULL COMMITTEE AND B/G ETAM HAD RAISED IT IN SUB-COMMITTEE. PATHET LAO DID NOT RESPOND.

12. AMBASSADOR CALLED ON SOTH PHETRASY, MINISTER OF ECONOMY (PATHET LAO), ON MAY 10 AND DISCUSSED THE KAY ISSUE. THE RESPONSE WAS THE STANDARD ONE -- UNDER CONSIDERATION AND HIGHER PRIORITIES.

13. AMBASSADOR MET WITH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INTERIOR DUEANE SOUNNARATH (PATHET LAO) ON MAY 16 AND MENTIONED THE IMPORTANCE OF RELEASE OF KAY. DUEANE RESPONDED THAT RELEASE WILL BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROTOCOL.

14. ON MAY 20, EMBOFF REPORTED MRS. KAY IN CONTACT WITH MINISTER OF INFORMATION SOUK VONGSAK (PATHET LAO), WHO TOLD HER TO BE PATIENT.

15. MR. ZENGER, INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS DELEGATE, ON MAY 21, INFORMED EMBOFF THAT GEN. DEL. OTT HAD PRESSED PHOUMI VONGVICHIT AND OTHER PATHET LAO OFFICIALS ON RELEASE OF KAY AND OTHER PW/MIA CASES. OTT RECEIVED PRO-FORMA REPLIES AND WAS TOLD THAT THE MATTER WAS UNDER DISCUSSION WITH THE JOINT COMMITTEE.

16. ALI NUN, CBS CAMERAMAN, SPOKE TO COLONEL PHAO BOUNNAPHOL, LPF SPOKESMAN, ON MAY 23 AND WAS TOLD THAT KAY WOULD NOT BE RELEASED BEFORE JUNE 4.

17. AMBASSADOR, ON MAY 23, RAISED QUESTION OF KAY WITH CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 VIENTI 04503 061322Z

PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA PHOUMA, WHO, IN TURN, INDICATED HE HAD RAISED QUESTION WITH PHOUMI VONGVICHIT, BUT HE WOULD RAISE THE ISSUE AGAIN.

18. SFRC STAFFDEL MOOSE, ON MAY 25, RAISED ISSUE OF KAY RELEASE WITH SOTH PHETRASY, MINISTER OF ECONOMY (PATHET LAO), WHO REPLIED THAT KAY WAS BEING WELL CARED FOR.

19. AMBASSADOR, ON MAY 28, IN CONVERSATION WITH PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA PHOUMA, ASKED IF RELEASE OF EMMET KAY HAD BEEN RAISED BY PRIME MINISTER WITH FOREIGN MINISTER PHOUMI VONGVICHIT. THE AFFIRMATIVE RESPONSE WAS FOLLOWED WITH THE STATEMENT THAT, ALTHOUGH THERE WAS NOTHING DEFINITE THE PRIME MINISTER HOPED THAT KAY WOULD BE RELEASED IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

20. AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED CONCERN TO FOREIGN MINISTER
PHOUMI VONGVICHIT JUNE 3 THAT KAY HAD NOT BEEN RETURNED.

21. L/JCRC, ON JUNE 4, IN CONVERSATION WITH AUSTRALIAN
MILITARY ATTACHE REQUESTED HE INQUIRE AS TO KAY'S RE-
LEASE DURING HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT TO SAM NEUA.

22. L/JCRC AND OTHER MISSION OFFICER HAVE ALSO, ON
NUMEROUS INFORMAL OCCASIONS, PURSUED THE SUBJECT OF KAY
AND PW/MIA ISSUE WITH INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS DELEGATE,
THE THREE MILITARY DELEGATES TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONTROL
COMMISSION, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY,
AND JOURNALISTS. JOURNALISTS HAVE BEEN REQUESTED TO RAISE
THE SUBJECT AT PRESS CONFERENCES, AND DID SO. DURING
INFORMAL CONTACTS, MEMBERS OF THE VIENTIANE SIDE DELEGATION
TO THE JOINT COMMISSION WERE EXHORTED TO RAISE THE ISSUE
AT THE COMMISSION MEETINGS, AND DID SO.
WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, TREATY VIOLATION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, POW RETURN
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 JUN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: smithrj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974VIENTI04503
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740144-0314
From: VIENTIANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740667/aaaacftc.tel
Line Count: 188
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION DPW
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 115946
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: smithrj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06-Aug-2002 by worrelsw>; APPROVED <20 FEB 2003 by smithrj>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POW/MIA - EMMET KAY - SUMMARY OF EMBASSY ACTIONS
TAGS: MOPS, LA, (KAY, EMMET)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005